RESEARCH ARTICLE   OPEN ACCESS

RUSSIA UKRAINE WAR- A MAN MADE DISASTER

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Abstract

As the Russian invasion of Ukraine continued for the ninth day, the country's energy minister said that the ex-Soviet state was at the risk of the largest man-made disaster in the history of mankind. As Russian troops bombarded Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant, German Galushchenko demanded "real interference" from NATO and other nuclear weapons states. In an online statement, he warned that the fire was already at the platform of the station and was spreading. He went on to emphasize that the war is aimed at demolishing, destroying "humankind and our planet." Asserting that Russia does not bother about the aftereffects of the anuclear explosion including radiation, he said that for the Russian administration, the life of Ukrainians, European and their citizens are different. In conclusion, he called for "required interference" with this international organization and stringent decisions on the issue. Following reports of Ukraine's Zaporizhzhya nuclear reactor catching fire due to Russian shelling, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy accused Russia of seeking to "repeat" the Chernobyl disaster. No country other than Russia has ever fired on nuclear power plants, Zelenskyy stated in a video message uploaded on Twitter with the single caption "Urgently" in Ukrainian.

Keywords: Russia, Ukraine, man-made, disaster, explosion, humankind, planet, NATO, minister

Introduction

Ukrainian authorities are claiming that Russian President Vladimir Putin has directed his troops who have taken over the Chernobyl nuclear reactor to "create a man-made catastrophe" at the site, media outlets reported citing the Ukrainian Defense Ministry.The order appeared to be part of what the US is saying will be a "false flag" used by Russia to escalate its fighting in Ukraine and even employ chemical weapons, the ministry's Intelligence Directorate indicated .Ukraine's intelligence services said that the "man-made catastrophe" will be carried out by Russian operatives who entered the compound with a group of specialists sent by Belarus.The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has downplayed Ukrainian panic over the Russian takeover but is trying to negotiate a solution between the sides.The IAEA said it was informed by Ukraine that technicians have started repairing damaged power lines at Chernobyl in an effort to restore power supplies.On Wednesday, Ukrainian authorities said that Chernobyl, the site of the 1986 nuclear disaster, was knocked off the power grid, with emergency generators supplying backup power.[1,2]

An operator's armchair covered with plastic sits in an empty control room of the 3rd reactor at the Chernobyl nuclear plant, in Chernobyl, Ukraine.

The Ukrainian nuclear regulator said Friday that workers repaired one section of the lines, but there was damage in other places, the IAEA said. Repair efforts would continue despite "the difficult situation" outside the plant, which was taken by Russian forces early in the invasion, it said.The Ukrainian regulator said additional fuel was delivered for generators, but it remains important to fix the power lines as soon as possible. The IAEA reiterated that the disconnection "will not have a critical impact on essential safety functions at the site."The Vienna-based UN nuclear watchdog said that it still isn't receiving data from monitoring systems installed to monitor nuclear material and activities at Chernobyl, but transmission from the Zaporizhzhia plant — Ukraine's biggest, which Russian forces seized last week — has been restored after being lost .[3,4]

Russia-Ukraine Conflict: Moscow's announcement of a military operation in Ukraine to protect civilians in the eastern region was followed by apparent explosions in cities across Ukraine.

Russia has launched a barrage of air and missile strikes on Ukraine and Ukrainian officials said that Russian troops have rolled into the country from the north, east and south.

Russia's commencement of a military strike in Ukraine has led to total chaos in the latter country. After Russian President Vladimir Putin officially ordered the operation, Russian forces fired missiles at several cities in Ukraine and also landed troops on the country's South Coast.News agency AFP reported that Russian ground forces have crossed into Ukraine. Meanwhile, Ukraine has said that nearly 50 Russian occupiers have been killed, AFP reported.Earlier in the day, five Russian planes and one helicopter were shot down by Ukraine in Luhansk. Moments later, Russia confirmed taking out military infrastructure at Ukraine's air bases and "suppressed" its air defences.Russia is facing global condemnation from Western powers over its actions in Ukraine with the European Union vowing to hold Moscow accountable for the military operation.[5,6]

Discussion

The US envoy to the UN said the world had narrowly averted a nuclear catastrophe in Russia's attack on Europe's largest nuclear power plant, as Moscow's forces intensified their devastating campaign of artillery and airstrikes against civilian areas of Ukraine.

Linda Thomas-Greenfield, speaking at an emergency meeting of the UN security council in New York on Friday, the US envoy said Russia's actions, which caused a major fire at the Zaporizhzhia compound, reflected a "dangerous new escalation" in its invasion of Ukraine. "Russia's attack last night put Europe's largest nuclear power plant at grave risk," she said. "It was incredibly reckless and dangerous. And it threatened the safety of civilians across Russia, Ukraine and Europe."Meanwhile, Ukraine's president issued a rebuke to Nato which earlier refused to impose a no-fly zone, over concerns that doing so could cause the war to escalate across Europe.In a furious late night speech, Volodymyr Zelenskiy said: "All the people who die from this day forward will also die because of

you, because of your weakness, because of your lack of unity."The alliance has given the green light to the bombing of Ukrainian cities and villages by refusing to create a no-fly zone."At a meeting of Nato foreign ministers in Brussels, the alliance's secretary general, Jens Stoltenberg said the alliance could not directly engage with Russian forces."The only way to implement a no-fly zone is to send Nato fighter planes into Ukraine's airspace, and then impose that no-fly zone by shooting down Russian planes," Stoltenberg said.[7,8]

Western leaders expressed outrage at the incident at Zaporizhzhia, with the British prime minister, Boris Johnson, describing Putin's actions as "now directly threatening the safety of all of Europe" and the US president, Joe Biden, condemning Moscow for the shelling, which Russia claimed was a "monstrous provocation" by Ukrainian saboteurs.The US embassy in Kyiv called the attack a "war crime" in a post on Twitter but the US state department reportedly distanced itself from the allegation, instructing its other embassies not to retweet the claim.The fire, at a training centre on the site's perimeter, was extinguished on Friday and officials said radiation was normal. The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Rafael Grossi, said the reactors were undamaged but the situation "naturally continues to be extremely tense and challenging". Russian forces seized the plant after heavy fighting.Russian ground forces in the south of Ukraine made an assault on the shipbuilding centre of Mykolaiv as they began their long-expected push west towards the key port of Odesa. Kyiv came under fresh heavy attack and local authorities in the northern city of Chernihiv raised the death toll from a missile strike on residential buildings .

In Russia, reporting of the war by international and local independent media was put under increasing pressure as the lower house of parliament passed a law punishing the intentional spreading of "fake" news about the military with

15 years in jail. The BBC announced it was suspending all operations in the country and the Russian newspaper Novaya Gazeta, edited by the Nobel peace prize winner Dmitry Muratov, said it would be removing content on Ukraine. Access to Facebook and Twitter was also completely blocked in retaliation for the social media platforms' restrictions on state-backed media.[9,10]

At the Nato foreign ministers's meeting Stoltenberg, described the Russian invasion of Ukraine as "the worst military aggression in Europe for decades … with cities under siege, schools, hospitals, and residential buildings shelled".In a sobering assessment of the military situation, he told reporters there was evidence of the use of cluster bombs and "other types of weapons which would be in violation of international law", adding: "The days to come are likely to be worse."He warned that there was also a growing risk of the war spreading to Georgia, on whose territory Vladimir Putin's troops are already present, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, where Bosnian Serbs have been threatening to break up the state with the Kremlin's support.The UN human rights office said it had confirmed 331 civilians, including 19 children, had been killed and 675 injured since the invasion began on 24 February, adding that the real toll would be much higher. Most were killed by explosive weapons such as shelling from heavy artillery, multi-launch rocket systems, missiles and airstrikes.

Results

The UN refugee and children's agencies said more than 1.2 million people had fled the country, including about half of a million children. The UNCHR spokesperson Joung-ah Ghedini-Williams described the rate as "phenomenal", adding that an equal number were probably displaced inside Ukraine.Ursula von der Leyen, the European Commission president, said the EU was working with NGOs in Ukraine to establish "humanitarian corridors", after

agreement between Kyiv and representatives from the Kremlin on Thursday. "Humanitarian aid must be able to reach all parts of Ukraine and civilians must be allowed to escape cities under siege," she said.The US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, said in Brussels that the west was "faced with what is President Putin's war of choice: unprovoked, unjustified, and a war that is having horrific, horrific consequences for real people. For mothers, fathers. For children. We see the images on TV, and it has to stop."Ukraine's foreign minister, Dmytro Kuleba, who had joined the meeting in Brussels by video link, showed Blinken and EU foreign ministers photographs of the carnage being wrought.

"One of which I think has also been in the media shows a father grieving over his dead child," Blinken said. "Blood is still on the sheet, the drapes, it's a reminder that even as we talk about these weighty issues of war and peace, what this is really about is the lives of men, women, children, hundreds, thousands of individual human tragedies inflicted by Vladimir Putin and his war of choice on Ukraine and its people and we can't lose sight of that fact."Putin, however, dismissed reports of airstrikes on Kyiv and other large Ukrainian cities as "gross propaganda fakes" in a phone call with the German chancellor, Olaf Scholz, the Kremlin said. The Russian president "confirmed Russia is open to dialogue" with Ukraine but only "on condition all Russian demands are met", it said.Those demands included neutral and non-nuclear status for Ukraine and its "denazification", the recognition of Crimea as part of Russia and of the "sovereignty" of separatist territories in eastern Ukraine, Moscow said.Putin told Scholz he hoped "Kyiv will take a reasonable and constructive position" in a third round of talks planned for next week, the Kremlin statement added. Putin separately warned Russia's neighbours on Friday "not to escalate the situation" by imposing more restrictions on his country.[11,12]

As Russian forces stepped up their assault on cities particularly in the south and east of Ukraine, the country's president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, said his country had "survived a night that could have stopped the story, the history of Ukraine, the history of Europe".

A day after Moscow's forces took control of the strategically important city of Kherson, the invading troops continued to besiege population centres, particularly in southern Ukraine, pounding them with artillery and airstrikes and causing devastating damage.The governor of Mykolaiv said Russian troops had entered his city of about 500,000 people, although a presidential adviser later said the advance had been halted.The south-eastern port city of Mariupol is also encircled by Russian forces and heavily bombarded, but remains under Ukrainian control.The city's deputy mayor, Sergei Orlov, said its humanitarian situation was "terrible" after 40 hours of continuous shelling including on schools and hospitals. "I believe that he wants to destroy Ukraine as a nation, and Mariupol is on this way."

Chernobyl

The Battle of Chernobyl was a military confrontation in the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone between the Russian Armed Forces and the Ukrainian Armed Forces, starting on 24 February 2022, during the first day of the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine. Russian forces invading from the country of Belarus seized the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant area by the end of that day. More than 300 people, 100 workers and 200 Ukrainian guards, have been trapped at the power plant since the Russians captured the site.

Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Ukrainian government announced that Russian forces had launched an attack to capture the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone. By the end of the day, the Ukrainian government further announced that Russian forces had captured Chernobyl and Pripyat. Following the Russian capture of the exclusion zone, the American government announced "credible reports that Russian soldiers are currently holding the staff of the Chernobyl facilities hostage."The Associated Press reported that artillery shelling hit radioactive waste storage locations and an increase in radioactivity was observed. However, the International Atomic Energy Agency has stated "there had been no casualties nor destruction at the industrial site."[13,14]

Ukrainian foreign minister Dmytro Kuleba claimed that since the power supply of the Chornobyl NPP was damaged, it lost power, and that the diesel generator backup systems only have enough fuel to support cooling operations for 48 hours, meaning that there would be danger of radiation leaks. The risk is uncertain, on one hand Ukrainian officers have a precedent for making public communications in the hopes of involving other countries in the war, on the other hand Russian military operations have already shown tolerance for producing nuclear risks when they caused a fire in the takeover of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant.The International Atomic Energy Agency released a statement expressing concern about the situation, but considering that the disconnection did not pose an immediate critical risk to the operations, considering that the large volumes of water allow for sufficient cooling without electricity. Nevertheless, the agency recognized that lack of electricity was likely to deteriorate radiation safety, specifically through the increased workload and stress on the 210 personnel working without rotations at the site. The IEAE has also expressed concern about the interruption of communications and the capacity of personnel to make decisions without undue pressure.On 11 March 2022, it was reported that all contact was lost.

Implications

Multiple explosions could be heard in the north of the separatist-controlled city of Donetsk in eastern Ukraine, a Reuters witness said. The origin was not immediately clear. Ukraine said earlier that one of its soldiers had been killed.Russia ordered the military buildup while demanding NATO stop Kyiv ever joining the alliance but says predictions it is planning to invade Ukraine are wrong and dangerous. It says it is now pulling back while Washington and allies insist the build-up is continuing in one of the worst crises since the Cold War.U.S. President Joe Biden, who has given regular warnings of an impending invasion, he now believes the capital Kyiv would be targeted by Russia but that he does not think Putin is even remotely contemplating using nuclear weapons.

"We have reason to believe the Russian forces are planning to and intend to attack Ukraine, in the coming days," Biden told reporters at the White House.Putin will oversee exercises by Russia's nuclear forces on Saturday involving the launch of ballistic and cruise missiles, the defence ministry said. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the exercises were part of a regular training process and Putin was likely to take part from a "situation centre". Analysts said it was a show of strength. "...nuclear forces exercises are sending message to US so that it leans harder on Kyiv. Doctrine of strategic tension at work," Dmitri Trenin, director of the Carnegie Moscow Center, wrote on Twitter.Russia has released footage to show it is withdrawing troops from the border but the United States says there has been a ramp-up to between 169,000-190,000 troops, from 100,000 at the end of January.New helicopters and a battle group deployment of tanks, armoured personnel carriers and support equipment have deployed in Russia, near the border, according to U.S.-based Maxar Technologies, which tracks developments with satellite imagery.

The Kremlin also has tens of thousands of troops staging exercises in Belarus, north of Ukraine, that are due to end on Sunday. Belarus' leader Alexander Lukashenko said they could stay as long as needed.Western countries fear a conflict on a scale unseen in Europe at least since the Yugoslav and Chechen wars of the 1990s, when hundreds of thousands died and millions fled and have urged Putin repeatedly to negotiate.The Kremlin confirmed that Putin and French President Emmanuel Macron will speak by phone, the TASS news agency reported.In a breakaway region of East Ukraine, Denis Pushilin, head of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, said he had signed a decree on mobilisation and called on men "able to hold a

weapon in their hands" to come to military commissariats.

Another separatist leader, Leonid Pasechnik, signed a similar decree for the Luhansk People's Republic shortly afterwards.Separatist authorities on Friday announced plans to evacuate around 700,000 people, citing fears of an imminent attack by Ukrainian forces - an accusation Kyiv flatly denied.[15]

Less than 7,000 people had been evacuated from Donetsk as of Saturday morning, the local emergencies ministry said. Russian news agencies said later 10,000 evacuees had arrived in Russia.At one evacuation point at a market in Donetsk, 38-year-old Oksana Feoktisova boarded a bus with her 9-year-old son and her mother. They were accompanied by Feoktisova's brother Yuri who stayed behind in Donetsk."They don't let men on, and I wouldn't go anyway frankly," Yuri said. "I'm a reservist in any case. I'm an artillery man by birth... I'm loyal to my state, to my people."Asked about the evacuations, White House press secretary Jen Psaki said on Friday they were a "good example" of what Washington fears, that Russia was trying to create confusion on the ground.Incidents of shelling across the line dividing government forces and separatists increased sharply this week, in what the Ukrainian government called a provocation. It strongly denied suggestions by Russia that Kyiv could launch an offensive in eastern Ukraine.Hours after the evacuation announcement, a jeep exploded outside a rebel government building in the city of Donetsk and Russian news agencies said two explosions hit Luhansk, one of the main cities in Ukraine's breakaway People's Republic of Luhansk, and part of a gas pipeline in the area caught fire.

Conclusions

There were 523 aircraft leased to Russian carriers by companies outside the country, according to IBA, a consulting firm. Of those, 101 are on lease to S7 Airlines and 89 to Aeroflot. Both airlines have stopped flying internationally, eliminating any chance of repossessing the planes on foreign soil. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said Russia was sending in new troops after Ukrainian forces had put 31 of its battalion tactical groups out of action in what he called Russia's largest army losses in decades. He gave no details and it was not possible to verify either statement. Invading Russian forces have struggled far more than expected against determined Ukrainian

fighters. But Russia's stronger military threatens to grind down Ukrainian forces, despite an ongoing flow of weapons and other assistance from the West for Ukraine's westward-looking, democratically elected government. "Operation Ganga, undertaken at the direction of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has delivered due to both leadership and commitment. We are thankful to all those who facilitated its objectives," Jaishankar said. Stripping Russia of its favored nation status paves the way for the United States and its allies to impose tariffs on a wide range of Russian goods, which would further ratchet up pressure on an economy that is already heading into a "deep recession."[16]

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